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The President's Daily Brief

4 March 1969

19

~~*Top Secret*~~ 50X1

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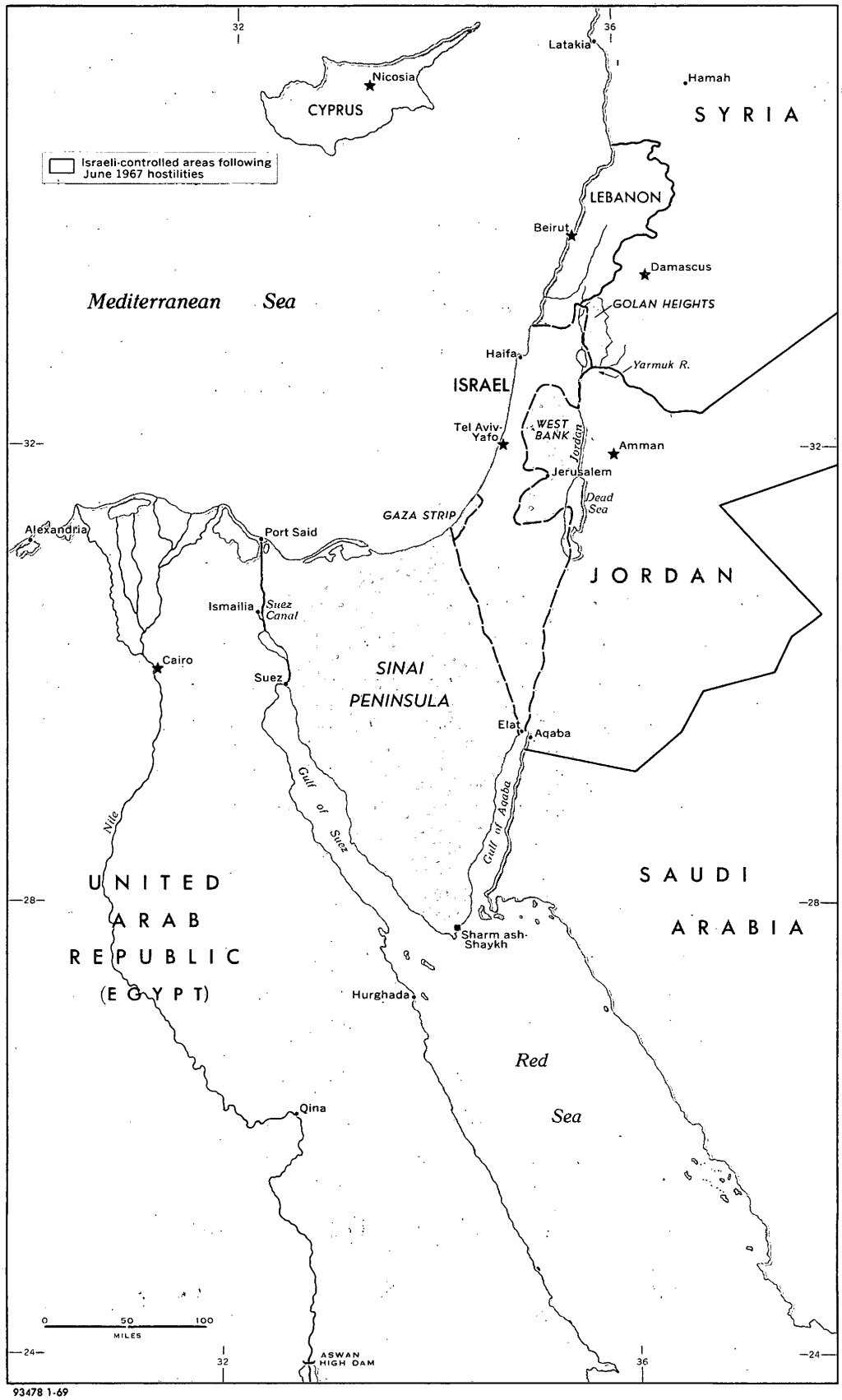

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I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

MIDDLE EAST

King Husayn is letting the terrorists operate more and more openly throughout Jordan. During the recent Muslim holidays, fedayeen groups collected funds in Amman, canvassing hotels and the homes of foreigners. They have also been harassing tourists, and Ambassador Symmes is worried about possible incidents involving US nationals. Jordanian security forces are now cooperating with the fedayeen's own security patrols.

Husayn's new modus vivendi with the fedayeen is no doubt based on a recognition of the terrorist movement's growing popularity in Jordan. The King also seems to think he can better control the fedayeen by working with them.

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It now appears that Moshe Dayan will defer his bid for the premiership--perhaps until the Labor Party convenes in June to decide the ranking of party leaders on the voting lists for the fall elections. Even though Dayan and his group abstained yesterday in the Labor Party vote approving Mrs. Meir's nomination as interim prime minister, he said he would stay on as defense minister. This would seem to rule out any attempt by Dayan to challenge Mrs. Meir's confirmation in the Knesset.

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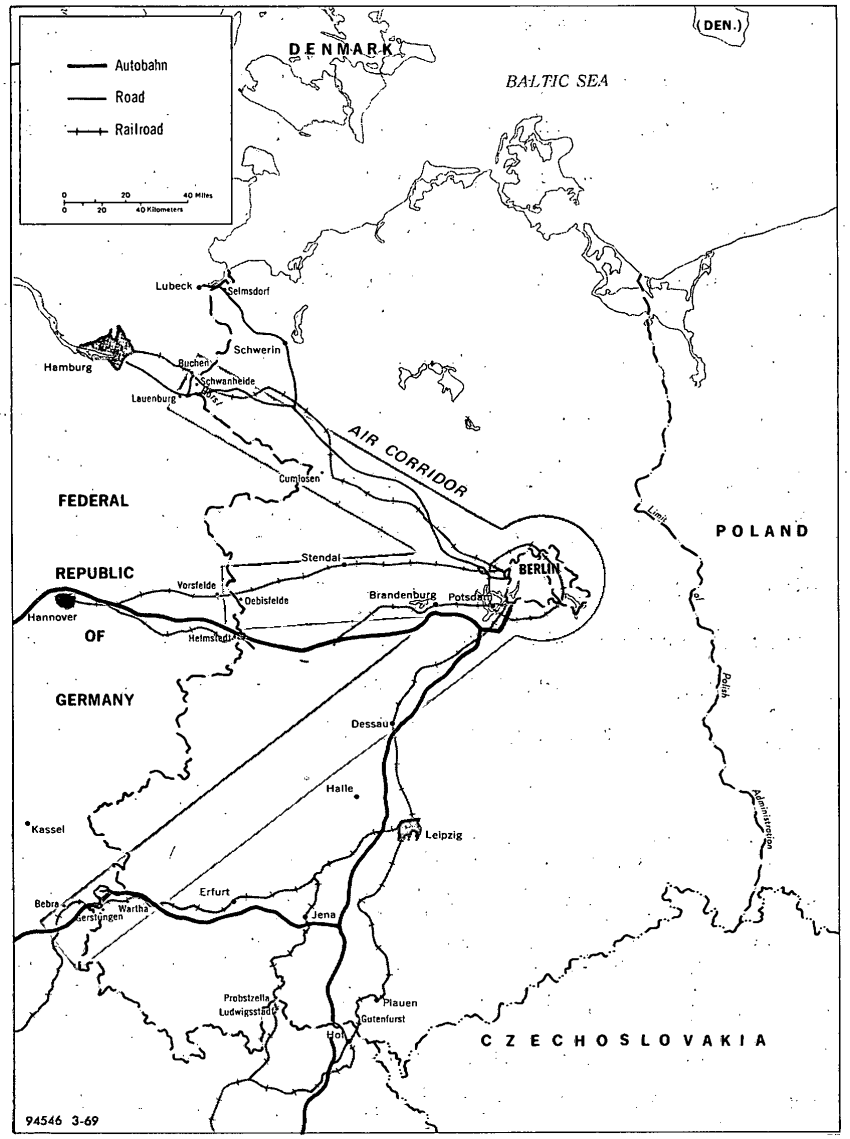
ACCESS ROUTES TO BERLIN



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EUROPE

There is nothing significant to report.

SOVIET AFFAIRS

The East German and West Berlin negotiators met again this afternoon on East German initiative in a last-ditch effort to reach some meeting of the minds before the West German presidential election tomorrow. [redacted] it seems that the East Germans offered passes for Easter and discussions on passes for other holidays if the West Germans transfer the election out of Berlin. This Chancellor Kiesinger is reported unwilling to do so late in the game; hence the meeting evidently will take place as scheduled in West Berlin and there will be no holiday passes for West Berliners. 50X1

The checkpoints at both ends of the Berlin-Helmstedt autobahn were closed to all traffic for about two hours in the afternoon. The delays were attributed to Soviet troop movements; small British and French convoys were held up, but no US convoys were involved. All other roads to and from Berlin were normal.

There was some Soviet air activity in the vicinity of the corridors. Allied air traffic continued normally, however, and the Soviet controller in the air safety center is maintaining a business-as-usual attitude.

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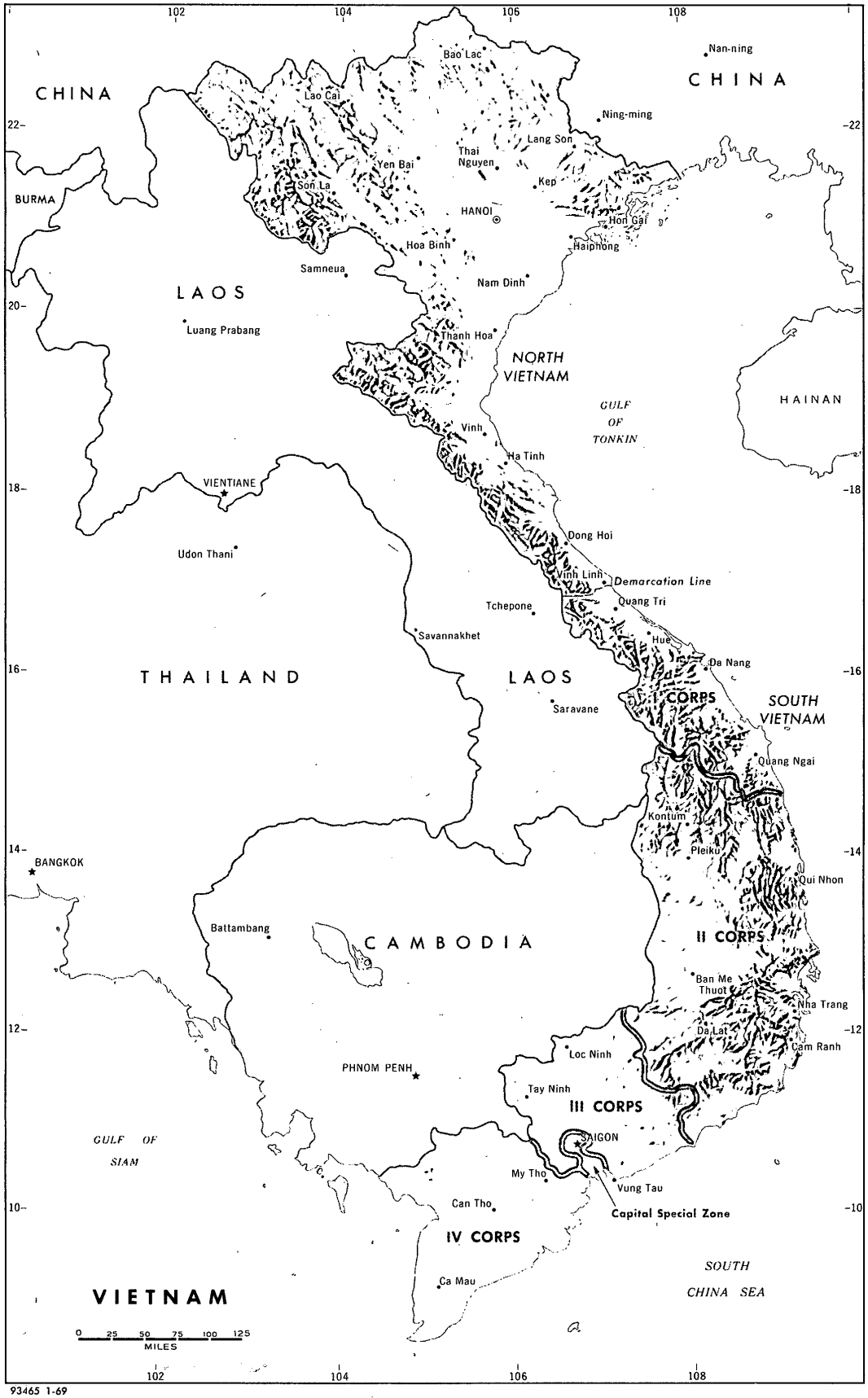

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VIETNAM

The Communists may have kicked off the second phase of their current offensive, at least in the highlands of II Corps. Two major enemy ground attacks occurred there in the last 24 hours. For only the second time in the war, the Communists used tanks in an unsuccessful attack on a special forces camp in Kontum Province. In the second attack, a US infantry company taking part in a sweep 30 miles to the southwest suffered heavy losses. Elsewhere in the country, action was generally low again yesterday.

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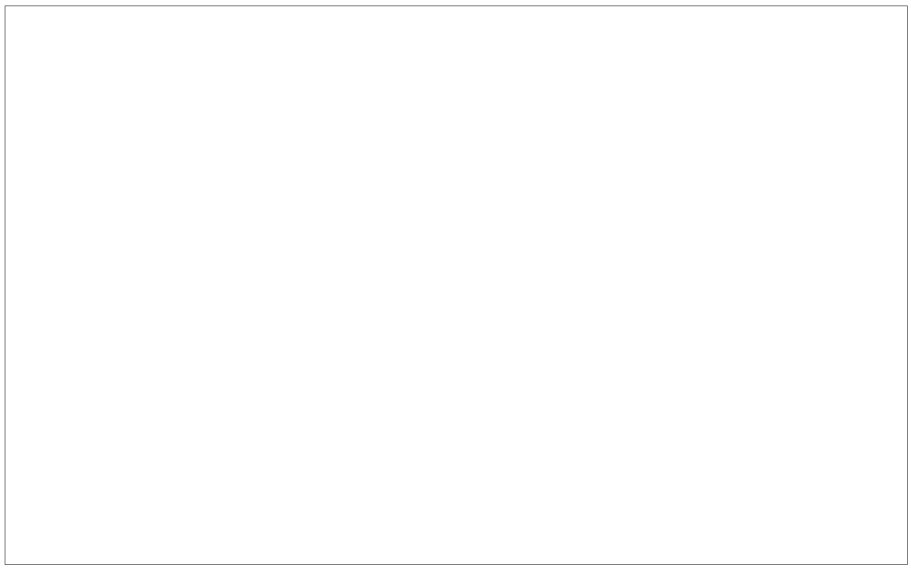

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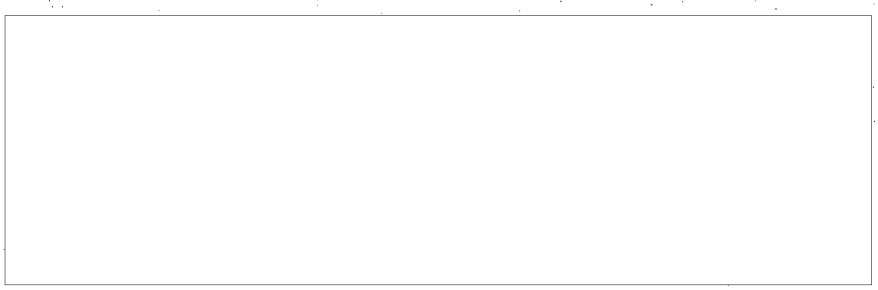

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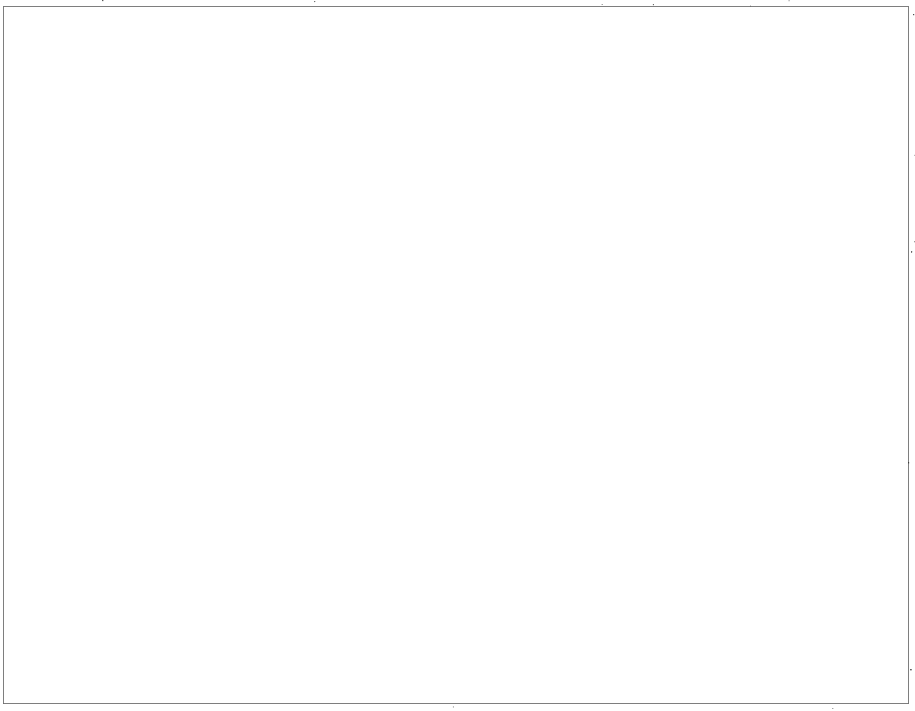

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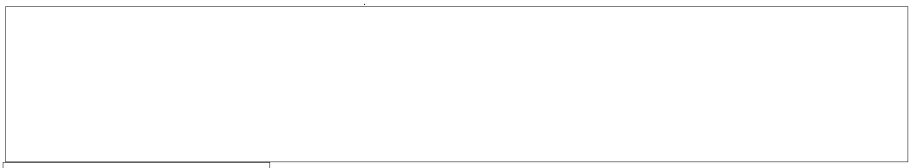

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II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

PANAMA

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The situation within the Guard [redacted] looks shaky following the removal of Colonel Martinez. Major personnel shifts and organizational changes could have had a weakening effect. Although Torrijos seems to have consolidated his position, the loyalty and unity of the Guard have not been tested since Martinez' ouster.

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COMMUNIST CHINA

The Annex today is a discussion of the Chinese Communist leadership.

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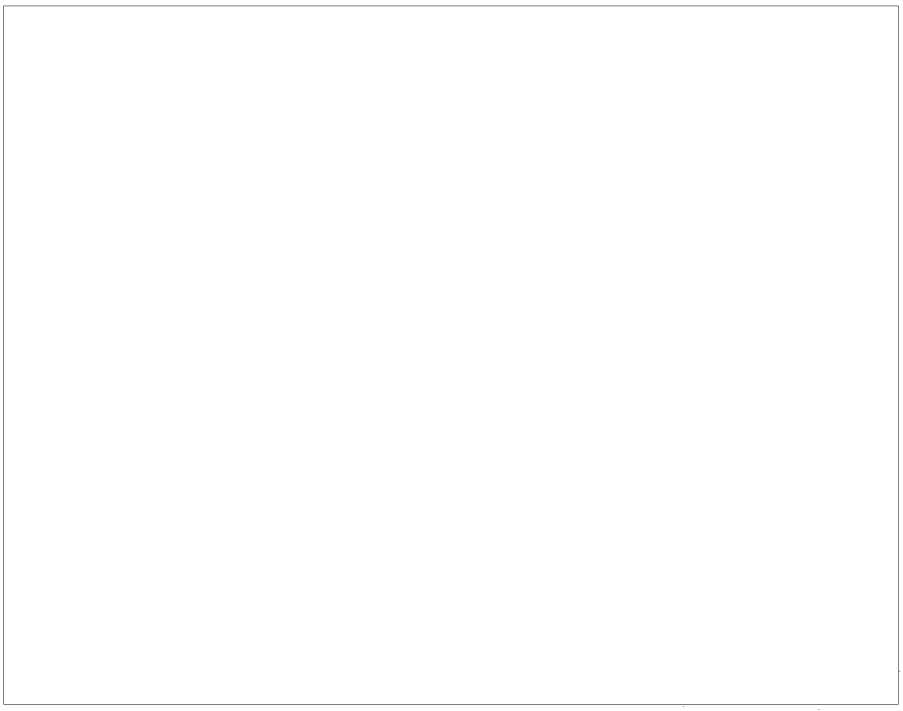
NATIONALIST CHINA - SOUTH KOREA



ETHIOPIA

The Ethiopian government's firm response to the annual student demonstrations this year probably ensures that the situation will stay under control over the short run. The underlying discontent, however, is deeper and more widespread than in the past and now has even penetrated into the military. The Emperor and his cabinet are said to be aware of the trouble. They are doing almost nothing, however, in the way of reforms to correct the basic problems, which are not unlike student problems elsewhere.

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The regime's foundations have been getting weaker year by year. The kind of demonstrations which the student radicals are determined to continue may find these foundations even weaker than they seem.

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EFFECTS OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION ON COMMUNIST CHINA'S LEADERSHIP

INNER CIRCLE OF POLITBURO

Mao Tse-tung
~~Liu Shao-chi~~
Chou En-lai
Lin Piao
~~Teng Hsiao-ping~~
~~Peng Chen~~

OTHER ACTIVE POLITBURO MEMBERS

Chen Yi
Li Fu-chun
~~Ho Lung~~
Li Hsien-nien
~~Li Ching-chuan~~
~~Tan Chen-lin~~
~~Ulanfu~~
~~Lu Ting-i~~
Chen Po-ta
Kang Sheng
~~Po I-po~~

OTHER IMPORTANT OFFICIALS

~~Lo Jui-ching~~
~~Tao Chu~~
~~Li Hsueh-feng~~ *(Purged, then partly rehabilitated)*
~~Sung Jen-chiung~~
~~Yang Shang-kun~~
~~Liu Ning-i~~
~~Liao Cheng-chih~~

Red lines are drawn through the names of those purged since 1965.

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ANNEX

The Leadership of Communist China

The leadership of Communist China has gone through a violent convulsion during the Cultural Revolution, one from which it will be a long time recovering. There was a massive purge of veteran party leaders in 1966. Since then, the survivors at the top of China's power structure--an inner circle of six still dominated by the venerable Mao Tse-tung--have presented a virtually unchanging public face. This appearance of stability has persisted despite violent social upheaval, bloody factional fighting, several reversals of national policy, and the political destruction of half a dozen men in the second echelon of the leadership.

The official voices of the regime have consciously portrayed the top six as a unified team. This is misleading. Today's power center is not the loyal phalanx of Mao's lieutenants that was projected to the outside world in the regime's first 16 years. These men are, rather, a disparate group, not natural or congenial allies.

The political elite today bears little resemblance to the monolithic Politburo of the 1950s. In addition to Mao, the inner circle includes four veteran leaders and Mao's wife. Since the spring of 1967, this inner circle has been supplemented by a frequently changing secondary elite. This group now numbers eight, all of whom are new to the apex of political power.

The central figure and still the authority for basic policy is Mao Tse-tung. His role in the decision-making

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process is almost certainly decisive, but he probably does not intervene personally except on issues of major importance. [redacted] 50X6

[redacted] 50X6

[redacted] Although arbitrary and suspicious, he has been forced, in the fluid political situation of the past several years, to arbitrate among competing interest groups and, on occasion, to compromise. He clearly feels that his time is running out, but despite disappointments and reversals, he has not abandoned his romantic vision of a communized, egalitarian China nor his sense that the Chinese revolution is his own creation. 50X6

In the early 1960s, Mao apparently detected a growing resistance to his policies from the entrenched party bureaucracy, and from this convinced himself that leaders in line to succeed him would sell out his revolution and turn to Soviet-style revisionism. This fear--partly paranoia, partly justified--is the overriding factor among many which have produced the "Cultural Revolution" which he unleashed in 1966. In striking at his erstwhile subordinates and the bureaucracy they controlled, Mao virtually demolished the old party machine painstakingly built up over a period of three decades. No cohesive organization has yet risen to replace it. On the contrary, the destructive energies of the Cultural Revolution have torn the body politic into competing interest groups, each striving for power--or survival--at the expense of the others.

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During the past three years a group of leaders associated with Mao's more radical policies rose rapidly on the crest of the political turmoil. These men have tended to encourage Mao to push his revolutionary ideas and to work against the established order. In opposition to this radical group, there has developed an amorphous coalition whose chief common concerns are to restore social order, stabilize the economy, and maintain national security. The most important components of this more moderate faction have been the military command structure, especially in the provinces, and the government administrators in Peking.

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This basic division seems to reach into the highest ranks of the leadership. Mao's designated successor Lin Piao, a brilliant military strategist who has led China's armed forces since 1959, may have lost the allegiance of some of the old-line military commanders who have been attempting to administer China's provinces by his unwavering support for Mao's disruptive social and political policies--which have included attacks on the military establishment. Lin still has followers in the army, but his present pre-eminence derives from Mao's faith in his loyalty.

Number three in the Peking hierarchy is the durable premier, Chou En-lai. With his fine instinct for political compromise and self-preservation, Chou has adroitly managed

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to serve Mao while at the same time moderating Mao's more extreme policies. Throughout the Cultural Revolution he has been the chief voice of reason in China and the symbolic leader of the moderates.

The other three figures in the inner circle, Mao's longtime ghostwriter and party theoretician Chen Po-ta, the secret police specialist Kang Sheng, and Mao's wife Chiang Ching, have been the principal leaders of the "Cultural Revolution Group"--the headquarters of the radicals. Mme Mao was a political nobody before the Cultural Revolution, not even a Central Committee member. When the Red Guards were unleashed in 1966, she quickly became the most vociferous spokesman for the militants. Public adulation accorded her has at times been exceeded only by that for Mao and Lin.

The next echelon of leadership has reflected the shifting balance of power in the Cultural Revolution. Six of the eight members of the secondary elite are not even members of the party Central Committee, an index of how rapidly they have risen to prominence. At levels just below this group figures have risen and fallen in kaleidoscopic fashion as the Cultural Revolution passed through phases of extreme radicalism or relative moderation. The eight junior members of the top leadership have been associated together for less than a year and are themselves split politically. Five seem to have been identified with the radical and destructive aspects of the past three years--two members of the Cultural Revolution Group, the commander of the Air Force, and two

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CURRENT LEADERSHIP ELITE IN CHINA

(Real political power seems concentrated in this group)

THE INNER CIRCLE

Mao Tse-tung

Lin Piao

Chou En-lai

Chen Po-ta

Kang Sheng

Chiang Ching

THE SECONDARY ELITE

Chang Chun-chiao

Yao Wen-yuan

Hsieh Fu-chih

Huang Yung-sheng

Wu Fa-hsien

Yeh Chun

Wang Tung-hsing

Wen Yu-cheng

The first six form the inner circle, which has only lost one member since January 1967. The next seven assumed their present status after the last purge in March 1968, and Wen was added in August 1968. These additional officials appear with the inner circle at all important public functions and presumably also carry considerable influence in the inner councils.

MAO TSE-TUNG	Chairman of party and Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC)
LIN PIAO	Vice Chairman, PBSC; Minister of National Defense; First Vice Chairman, Military Affairs Committee (MAC)
CHOU EN-LAI	Member, PBSC; Premier
CHEN PO-TA	Member, PBSC; Chairman, Cultural Revolution Group (CRG)
KANG SHENG	Member, PBSC; Adviser, CRG
CHIANG CHING	First Vice Chairman, CRG
CHANG CHUN-CHIAO	Vice Chairman, CRG
YAO WEN-YUAN	Member, CRG
HSIEH FU-CHIH	Member, MAC; Minister of Public Security; Chairman, Peking Municipal Revolutionary Committee
HUANG YUNG-SHENG	Member, MAC; Chief of Staff
WU FA-HSIEN	Member, MAC; Deputy Chief of Staff; Commander of Air Force
YEH CHUN	Member, the CRG in the People's Liberation Army; wife of Lin Piao
WANG TUNG-HSING	Vice Minister of Public Security
WEN YU-CHENG	Deputy Chief of Staff; Commander, Peking garrison

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members of a purge group within the military. The other three--the political leader of Peking city, the army chief of staff, and the commander of the Peking garrison--have been more closely identified with Chou En-lai and the military establishment.

This small group of 14 leaders is highly unstable. It will probably be able to retain its superficial unity, but behind the scenes its members seem to be engaged in political fights which are eroding its cohesion and effectiveness.

The problems of the top leadership have been compounded because the Cultural Revolution has largely destroyed the institutional framework in which political power had been embodied since 1949. The Politburo, for example, has been badly shaken by the purges and no longer represents the pinnacle of power in China. The State Council and the party Central Committee have declined even further in importance, while the party secretariat has ceased to function. As a result the top leadership has had to rely increasingly on the army--itself strained and perhaps split by the events of the Cultural Revolution--to administer the country.

This certainly means that the views of the military establishment, and particularly those commanders who are in direct charge of most of China's provinces, carry a great deal of weight in policy formulation, but we are unclear how the military participate in the decision-making

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process. At present the leadership is placing great emphasis on rebuilding the battered party apparatus in preparation for the long-postponed Ninth Party Congress. As this effort goes forward friction between the military and civilian party personnel is likely, further confusing lines of authority.

We have little good information on how decisions are reached in Peking at present, or on the relative weight of individual members of the top leadership in the inner councils of the regime. However, some kind of consensus politics seems to be at work. In contradistinction to the situation before the Cultural Revolution, when a very few top leaders--Mao, Chou En-lai, Mao's former deputy Liu Shao-chi and former party general secretary Teng Hsiao-ping--took quick decisions and issued orders by fiat, most important decisions of the top leadership seem to be the result of wider discussion, considerable political infighting and frequent compromise.

A good example of this process was the formation--over a period of more than a year--of the "revolutionary committees" that now formally govern each of China's provinces. Political patronage considerations led to an enormous amount of bickering and pulling and hauling in the setting up of these committees, both in Peking and in the provinces themselves. Complex political rivalries and alliances slowed the process and occasionally forced the reopening of questions presumably "settled." Continued bickering has also led the top leadership frequently to issue vague directives

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that can be and are variously interpreted at lower levels, and has hindered effective follow-through on seemingly firm orders.

The political demise of the Red Guards in the summer of 1968 has also had an effect on the formulation and implementation of policy by the Peking leadership. Mao and his radical lieutenants now lack a ready means of stirring up mass action against the established bureaucracy. On the other hand, military commanders, who were in 1967 and 1968 clearly opposed to the destructive activities of the Red Guards, may now be more willing to carry out extreme Maoist social policies. Provincial military leaders who in 1967 were themselves under Red Guard attack are now pushing programs that bear a "made in Peking, by Mao" label. This apparent accommodation may have weakened the position of government officials associated with Chou En-lai, who have a vested interest in careful planning and rational policies. Some of these figures have recently seemed to be losing influence.

The present leadership in Peking is in any event faced with enormous problems, some of long standing, and some engendered by the excesses of the Cultural Revolution. It is most unlikely that the 14 leaders who at present are on top of the political pyramid in China have a common approach to these problems, and further political infighting involving both policy questions and personal rivalries is probably in prospect.

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TOP SECRET

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LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF

4 MARCH 1969

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5 March 1969

LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF 4 MARCH 1969

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

Middle East

The Israelis claim that there has been an upsurge of sniping incidents in the Suez Canal area over the past few days and that several soldiers have been wounded, one today. The Chief of the General Staff said Israel would take retaliatory action if the Egyptian firing continued. (Press, 5 Mar 69)

Europe

There is nothing significant to report.

Soviet Affairs

The East Germans closed the Berlin-Helmstedt autobahn again this morning for three hours, but as of 0700 EST (1300 local), traffic was moving normally on all roads between West Germany and Berlin and in the air corridors. One US convoy was held up on a trip from Berlin to West Germany. The rumored closing of checkpoints between the eastern and western sections of Berlin itself has not occurred and all are open to traffic.

Meanwhile, the West German presidential election was due to get under way at 1000 local time. As of 0700 EST (1300 local) no results were in, but the decision of the 83 Free Democratic members of the Federal Assembly to join the 449 Social Democrats in backing Justice Minister Gustav Heinemann makes him the favorite to defeat Defense Minister Gerhard Schroeder of the CDU. [redacted] 50X1

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VIETNAM

Except for the unsuccessful attempt by assailants, some dressed in South Vietnamese military uniforms, to assassinate Prime Minister Tran Van Huong as he left his office for home at the lunch hour, the situation in Vietnam is stable.

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II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

SOVIET UNION - COMMUNIST CHINA

A TASS representative in Moscow has told our embassy that publicity was given to last Sunday's border incident because the "numbers involved" made any other course unfeasible. He said the Soviets regard the incident as a culmination of local tensions in the area and went out of his way to state that it is not regarded in Moscow as a deliberate political provocation by Peking.

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